REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 5-20 are now pending in the application. Claims 3 and 4 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 2 and 5-20 stand rejected.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

The Examiner is further respectfully requested to note the correct spelling of the first named inventor's last name, which is incorrectly presented on the previous and current Office Action Summaries. The correct spelling of the first named inventor's last name is de La Chapelle.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2 and 5-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ronald (U.S. Pat. No. 5,880,867) in view of Hiett (U.S. Pat. No. 6,477,152) and Morris et al. (UK Patent Application No. 2,347,806) This rejection is respectfully traversed.

1. Regarding Claims 1, 2 and 5-9, Claims 2 and 5-9 depend from Claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to recite, "A system for providing wireless communication within a local area network (LAN) on board a mobile platform, said system comprising: at least one seat transceiver mounted to each of a plurality of passenger seats located in a passenger seating area, said seat transceivers interconnected with each other; at least one passenger service unit (PSU) located above the passenger seating area, said PSU comprising at least one PSU transceiver configured to substantially simultaneously have a direct path infrared (IR) signal transmission link with at least two adjacent said seat transceivers, thereby providing a redundant optical signal path to each one of said adjacent seat transceivers via said interconnection of said seat transceivers, said direct path IR transmission link configured to transmit data between said seat transceivers and said PSU transceiver."

Neither Ronald, Hiett, nor Morris et al. describe, show or suggest a communication system on board a mobile platform that includes at least one seat transceiver mounted to each of a plurality of passenger seats, wherein the seat transceivers are interconnected with each other.

Rather, Ronald describes infrared transceiving pairs 1201, 1203 and 1205 directly wired to an access point 1223 located behind a luggage bin 1227. Through the infrared transceiving pairs, a passenger's equipment that uses its own infrared transceiver pair may be coupled to the network. For example, a passenger may couple a portable computer 1233 to the network via its own transceiver pair (not shown) and the infrared transceiver pair 1207. Thus, Ronald does not describe, show or suggest interconnected seat transceivers mounted to passenger seats.

Hiett describes a receiver user interface 302 that may comprise any suitable system for presenting the information to the user, for example a display or an audio transducer. The receiver user interfaces suitably comprise seat-back displays and/or portable computer systems connected to the router 308 via the aircraft LAN 304. Thus, Hiett does not describe, show or suggest interconnected seat transceivers mounted to passenger seats.

Morris et al. describes an in-flight entertainment system where each seat is provided with a transceiver for receiving data and entertainment from a central control within the aircraft and for communicating the user's input to the central controller. Thus, Morris et al. does not describe, show or suggest interconnected seat transceivers mounted to passenger seats.

Furthermore, neither Ronald, Hiett nor Morris et al. describe, show or suggest a communication system on board a mobile platform that includes at least one passenger service unit (PSU) having at least one PSU transceiver that substantially simultaneously has a direct path infrared (IR) signal transmission link with at least two adjacent seat transceivers. Additionally, neither Ronald, Hiett nor Morris et al. describe, show or suggest providing a redundant optical signal path to each one of the adjacent seat transceivers due to the interconnection of the seat transceivers and the simultaneous direct path IR signal transmission link with adjacent seat transceivers.

Rather, Ronald describes a communication network wherein the infrared transceiving pair 1311 is aimed at a fixed location in the center of a tray-table, the pair 1311 might alternately be mounted with a ball in socket joint to provide adjustable

aiming. Also, Fig 12 of Ronald illustrates the transceiving pair 1201 directing an IR signal toward a single tray-table. Thus, Ronald does not describe, show or suggest a communication system that simultaneously has a direct a direct path IR signal transmission link with adjacent seat transceivers. Additionally, Ronald describes a transceiver pair 1311 mounted within the tray-table or armrest and having a direct wire connection with the access point located behind a luggage bin 1227. Ronald describes interconnections between the transceiver pair and the access point, not an interconnection between seat transceivers. Furthermore, Ronald describes the access point being communicatively coupled to the server 1153 via a communication pathway 1175. The communication pathway 1175, between the access point behind the luggage bin 1227 and the server 1153, can be constructed in several different ways. In one embodiment, the communication pathway 1175 constitutes coaxial Ethernet links, although alternate types wired links might be employed. A preferred embodiment includes two types of links for the communication pathway 1175. Ronald describes alternate types of wired links between the access point and the server, not redundant optical signal paths to each one of the adjacent seat transceivers due to the interconnection of the seat transceivers and the simultaneous direct path IR signal transmission link with adjacent seat transceivers.

As set forth above, Hiett describes that information is provided to the user by the receiver user interface 302 for presenting the information to the user, for example a display or an audio transducer. Thus, Hiett does not describe, show or suggest a PSU transceiver that substantially simultaneously has a direct path infrared (IR) signal transmission link with at least two adjacent seat transceivers, wherein a redundant optical signal path is provided to each one of the adjacent seat transceivers due to the interconnection of the seat transceivers and the simultaneous direct path IR signal transmission link with adjacent seat transceivers.

As set forth above, Morris et al. describes an in-flight entertainment system where each seat is provided with a transceiver for receiving data and entertainment from a central control within the aircraft and for communicating the user's input to the central controller. Thus, Morris et al. does not describe, show or suggest

interconnected seat transceivers mounted to passenger seats. Thus, Morris et al. does not describe, show or suggest a PSU transceiver that substantially simultaneously has a direct path infrared (IR) signal transmission link with at least two adjacent seat transceivers, wherein a redundant optical signal path is provided to each one of the adjacent seat transceivers due to the interconnection of the seat transceivers and the simultaneous direct path IR signal transmission link with adjacent seat transceivers.

Therefore, neither Ronald, Hiett nor Morris et al. describe, show or suggest a communication system as recited in amended Claim 1. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 1 is patentable over Ronald in view of Hiett and Morris et al. When the recitations of Claims 2 and 5-9 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 2 and 5-9 are likewise patentable over Ronald in view of Hiett and Morris et al.

2. Regarding Claims 10-15, Claims 11-15 depend from Claim 10, which has been amended, as shown above, to include limitations similar to the limitations set forth above in amended Claim 1. In accordance with the comments set forth above with respect to amended Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 10 is also patentable over Ronald in view of Hiett and Morris et al. When the recitations of Claims 11-15 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 10, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 11-15 are likewise patentable over Ronald in view of Hiett and Morris et al.

3. Regarding Claims 16-20, Claims 17-20 depend from Claim 16, which has been amended, as shown above, to include limitations similar to the limitations set forth above in amended Claim 1. In accordance with the comments set forth above with respect to amended Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 16 is also patentable over Ronald in view of Hiett and Morris et al. When the recitations of Claims 17-20 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 16, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 17-20 are likewise patentable over Ronald in view of Hiett and Morris et al.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (314) 726-7500.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 8/10/04

By: _____
Scott T. Gray, Reg. No. 48,891

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
7700 Bonhomme, Suite 400
St. Louis, Mo 63105
(314) 726-7500